

P2 Tests Performed:

Environmentally preferable spill cleanup supplies

The Waste Management Team has tried several products to replace synthetic spill cleanup products. No environmentally preferable alternatives have been successful, but they are open to any new, promising technology. What follows are the lessons learned in trying various biobased pads.

1989 Exxon
Valdez oil spill



First responders (Jeff Wagner and others) use spill supplies provided by Waste Management. The following are the results of tests performed by first responders using biobased and recycled materials:

- 1) Corn cob pads: As the pads were stored, varmints such as mice, rats, and birds found them to be quite comfortable for building nests or using as a restroom. This bird and rodent problem also occurred with synthetic pads, but not to the extent it did with corn cob pads, which they also found to be delicious.
- 2) Other plant-based spill pad: A car was leaking gas. A pad was placed on the spill, and the pad fell apart.
- 3) Recycled material pads: The pads are not as durable as new synthetic pads. When they were thrown on the ground for oil (or other) spills, they fell apart.

Also, the biobased pads became moldy if damp. One company said they treated for mold, but it didn't make a difference. Plus, the Team found that organic pads don't have as much holding capacity as synthetic pads. For example, if a spill sock is with made from corn cobs, even if it is not saturated, it will release the fluid prematurely.

Further tests will be performed as new technology becomes available.